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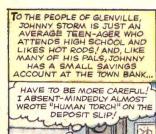
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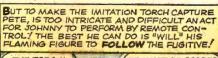














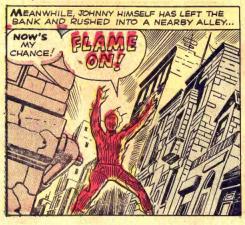








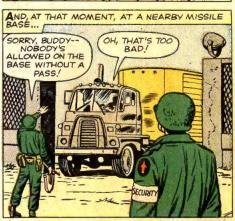


















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MONONGAHELA MUN- brought. ROE was the first man on Earth, the thundering crowds that had seen his ship off on its maiden flight, had known it. He could remember the weeping, waving, girls; the strong, manly handclasps; the bunting and gaybanners that surrounded AN-DERSON Field on that memorable day-two weeks ago-when the Congressman Newton took off for Venus. But if he was the first man on Venus, why was his left foot caught tightly and irremovably in a late nineteenth century beartrap?

Heat and pain crowded hallucinations into his brain. He could be crazy. It might be a delusion-and vet the pain was horribly real. He lifted his head and shielding his eyes from the burning sun, he looked back over the mountainous terrain he had traveled in the past five hours. He looked down at the trap again and let a sob escape from his lips. This was stupid. He-Monongahela Monroe, explorer extraordinary, adventurescarred veteran of hundreds of treks into the interior of darkest Europa - caught in an ancient trap, and very obviously and amateurishly contrived and set at that.

But - who would have been on the lookout for it? He fumbled in his plastic jacket for a cigarette and groaned between brook, and landed on the other clenched teeth at the throb of side smack into a bear trap that agony the movement had sunk it's razor-sharp teeth into

He had left his ship, blaster Venus. He knew it. Back on in one hand, and recording camera clicking away at his waist. Cautiously, he had picked his way through the purple, bloated, ankle-high grass, eyes peeled for signs of animal life. The purple plain had stretched endlessly into the horizon, its sameness broken only by clumps of five or six low-foliaged. twisted trees, and by low hills of rocks.

> The hills were too evenly spaced to be natural, but the two or three he had taken apart revealed nothing but the solid heap of irregular, fist - sized boulders, piled as high Monogahela's waist.

After five miles of nothing but purple grass, twisted trees and stone haystacks, he came upon the brook. By this time the quiet had begun to unnerve him, and he found himself increasingly worried about the mysterious mound builders. Who were they? Where were they?

It was when he'd looked into the glass-clear brook that it had happened. The tiny aquatic animals, lashing heads on either ends had reminded him of the man-eating piranhas of darkest America, he'd smiled knowingly to himself. This was one chance that a novice might have taken, but he, of course, knew better. Oh yes! So he'd leaped the both his legs.

He could tell that his left leg was broken. His right leg? He wasn't sure. He coughed and flipped the cigarette into the brook. Before it reached the water one of the fish - he thought of them as fish-shot out and grabbed it in the mouth of one of its heads. Monroe twisted back in surprise - pain shooting up his thigh. But he blinked and looked again at what he saw then. The creature didn't fall back into the smooth mirrored surface of the brook. Instead eight other fishes leaped immediately into action, one beneath the other - like master jugglers-balancing the top one, who proceeded to blow smoke out of the other head.

Mouth open, Monongahela watched unbelievingly until the cigarette had been smoked to a half-inch butt. Then the crazy pyramid dissolved back into the water and only the smooth surface of the brook could be seen again.

Monongahela drew in a breath sharply and discovered to his surprise that he had sat down while the floor-show was on. The pain in his legs, momentarily forgotten, returned in a wave of anguish,

He fumbled in his plastic jacket and brought out a spray hypodermic. He depressed the plunger over his leg and sighed with relief as the hundred c.c.'s of pseudomorphine took hold. Thank the lord, at least he'd



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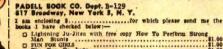












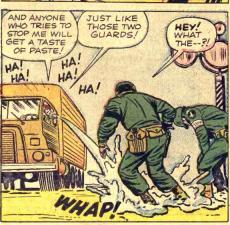




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BUT, UNOBSERVED BY THE TORCH AND HIS FOE, SOME OF THE PASTE SEEPS INTO THE MISSILE... AND A MOMENT LATER IT TRIGGERS OFF THE DELICATE, ELECTRONIC MECHANISM.'











BUT THEN, AS THE LAST REMAINING SECONDS















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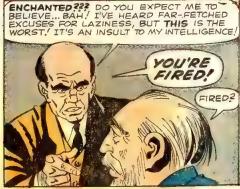








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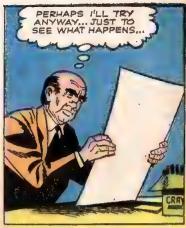
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I'M IN ITS POWER! AND

THE ONLY MAN WHO'D









come prepared for accidents!

hips down, he was able to con- him. centrate on his problem. Should he try to free himself from the wizme?" trap and attempt to drag himing him from his ship? Would ed to catch a human-or had they? Could they have known he was coming?

Now he was being foolish. Even if they had, how would they know he would come in this direction and step in this particular spot? Perhaps they had traps placed in hundreds of other strategic places, and this just happened to be the first he'd blundered into. Still, it seemed offhand that there were more logical ways of catching him, if that indeed had been the trapper's intention.

He bent forward awkwardly, dropping his blaster at his side, and tried to pry the jaws of the trap apart. Five minutes of straining convinced him that it was beyond his strength - at least, under his present condi-

tions.

He leaned back, grunting, and his right hand reached for the blaster. He groped blindly for a moment, then looked down, panic-stricken. The blaster was gone!

soaked half-inch cigarette butt!

He shrank away from it and clawed at the trap again-this wizme?" was indeed madness. He had to get away, to think these things back into the water. He heard out as clearly as possible.

He screamed out into the si- sky above him. It looked likelence of the plains. "Who are It was-an Earth ship. The secyou? What do you want with ond ship of the convoy that was me?" The sound of his voice coming out to colonize Venus.



skeleton. A circle for a head, two swinging lashing arms, and trembling, swaying legs. The And in its place lay the water- words came flowing in spinechilling harmony.

"W booayoo? W adooyoowant-

Suddenly the fish all dropped Munroe, I presume.".... the sound of a deep roar in the died with a frightening sudden. He had to send an S.O.S. before

ness, and a fish leaped out of they landed or they would All sensation gone from the the water spitting an echo at never find him. There had to be some way to signal them. He "Whooayoo? Wadooyoowant- couldn't think of a way, and finally it was too late. The ship Hundreds of them leaged out downed rockets and he could self over the five miles separat- of the water hooking themselves tell that they had landed miles together by their hooked teeth away from him. He was as good it be better to wait for the set- like sections in a steel rod. They as dead now. He had about deters of the trap to find him? formed a shape that looked like cided that these fish-creatures Obviously, they had not intend- the line caricature of a man's who smoked cigarettes, and stole blasters, and echoed things he said, were the only creatures that lived on Venus. Perhaps many years ago another Earthtraveler had landed on this planet and left this trap in hope of catching some animal for food. He had probably starved to death.

Suddenly it came to him. A way he could contact that Earthship. He called out in his weak voice. "Help!".

The fish leaped out of the brook and called, "Hel-up!" Other fish from other brooks took up the cry. "Hel-up! Helup!" The sound was relayed down the strange-hills of Venus. He knew that it would get to the ship, and that they would know he was alive, and come for him. . . .

Three days later, he was starving and weak. He was about to give up all hope of being saved, when he heard footsteps behind him. He turned and saw three men dressed in Earth-clothing. Thank goodness he was saved. One of them stepped forward and smiled at

He said: "Mr. Monongahela

THE END



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FOR ALTHOUGH ZAKKIM FOUND HIMSELF
WITH THE FORM OF A FROG, HE STILL HAD
HIS OWN SINISTER BRAIN...

HE HAS CAST A SPELL OVER ME! BUT
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ESCAPE--SOMEWHERE--ANYWHERE!



























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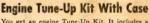
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As part of its practical training program, CTI sends you 30 Job Experience Projects. These exclusive projects make it easy for you to make the transition from lessons to repairs. You learn by practicing, gain skill in the use of tools and test instruments, acquire useful experience that builds your confidence. CTI shop projects do away with — or sharply reduce — lower pay apprenticeship . . . get you into the top pay bracket more quickly.

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The average pay of an auto mechanic compares favorably with the best in all industry. But, if you prefer, you can open a shop-start your own business. It is estimated that America is short 25,000 shops. CTI provides you with the required all-around mechanical training to go di your own. You learn tune-up and overhaul: electric, cooling and lubricating systems; power steering and brakes; automatic transmissions. Even a choice of either Diesel Mechanics or Body & Fender Rebuilding instruction!

Proof of Success Is Progress of Students

"Am now a senior auto mechanic. Made \$800 during training." Ranald Wharton, Md. "Started a small business in my garage. Now have two partitime helpers." -John Reed, Cal. "Am proud I finished course. Have two job offers." -Barden Vance, Ind. "Am working as a mechanic and earn twice" what I used to, Made \$25 a "week as I trained." -Jerome Slowik, Ill., "Have three job offers. Made \$170 as a student." -Willie Cooper, Pla.

Many Earn Cash Soon After Starting Course

Many CTI students begin fixing cars after a few leasons. They earn extra money-which helps pay tuition, buys extra equipment. At the same time, these students become more skillful and experienced in the use of tools and testing instruments.

Diesel or Body & Fender Rebuilding Included

Diesel Mechanics or Body and Fender Rebuilding instruction is provided by CTI in addition to the complete course and 30 shop experience projects in Auto Mechanics. No extra charge for this training. Only CTI offers you this generous choice.

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